



[www.parkland.edu/careercenter](http://www.parkland.edu/careercenter)

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Hours:

Monday - Friday  
8a.m. - 5p.m.

2400 W. Bradley Ave.  
Champaign, IL 61821  
Room A175

# 10 Cover Letter Tips

1. **A cover letter should always accompany the resumé** and is used whenever emailing, faxing, or snail mailing.
2. **Cover letters should be one page**, using standard business letter format, in 11-12 point font.
3. **Many employers look to the cover letter as an example of your written communication skills.** Make certain that your cover letter is spell-checked, grammar-checked, and proofed by someone other than yourself.
4. **Address the letter to a specific person**, using his/her correct title. If you are unsure as to whom the letter should be addressed, call the company and ask. Request spelling and title verification if necessary.
5. **Tailor the letter to the needs of the organization** or the description of the position. Explaining what you want throughout the letter doesn't tell the reader the BENEFIT of what you can offer.
6. **Capture the reader's attention** by highlighting your skills and abilities (think accomplishments and give examples); emphasize their usefulness to the employer.
7. **Be precise and concise** - don't waste the employers' time with fluff or wordiness.
8. **Be professional** but don't be afraid to show enthusiasm and interest in the position. Keep the tone positive.
9. **Keywords are key.** Because many companies use applicant tracking systems (ATS) to find and screen candidates, skill-oriented keywords will boost your chance at being discovered. Match your qualifications to the job description!
10. **If submitting by email**, type the letter in the body of the email and attach your resumé. Use short paragraphs to give a brief bio on who you are and what you can do for them. Wrap it up in the second paragraph. Subject line might say "CPA seeks account position."

*(See reverse side for cover letter template)*

**Visit the Career Center (room A175) for assistance with resumé, interviewing, career guidance, and occupational information.**

[10-12 lines]

Your Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone (may use the heading from your resumé)

[4 lines]

Date

Contact's Name

Title

Company Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear [Mr. or Ms. last name]:

First paragraph: Clearly state the reason you are writing, explain the type of work you are interested in, and indicate how you learned about the employer and/or the specific opening. Let them know you've done your homework. You may want to say something specific and flattering about the organization, [e.g. "(Name of organization) has an excellent reputation locally for \_\_\_\_\_ and I would like to become part of your team."]

Second (and third if relevant) paragraph(s): Be specific about why you are interested in the position. Briefly summarize some of your strongest qualifications to do the work. Highlight and expand on specific aspects of your resumé that are relevant, (e.g. "As indicated on the enclosed resumé... or "Of particular interest to you may be my [accomplishments, skills, experience] in the area of \_\_\_\_\_.") Remember to consider this from an employer's point of view. Show what education, skills, talents, and accomplishments you have to offer the employer; **show how you can be of value to them (rather than how they can be of value to you).**

Closing paragraph: If you haven't done so above, refer the reader to the resumé you are enclosing. State your interest in an interview and offer to provide further information upon request. Make it easy for the employer to respond by 1) including your telephone number and times when you are available to receive calls; 2) indicating when you will contact the employer\*; or 3) stating when you will be available for an interview.

Sincerely,

[4 lines]

Signature

[Your name typed]

Enclosure: Resumé

\*[If you say you will call, make sure you follow through. If you don't, you will appear disinterested and unreliable.]